



J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

December 27, 2006

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley *[Signature]*
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – O'CONNER AND
ATKINS GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of O'Conner and Atkins Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by O'Conner and Atkins Group Home, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home is an eight-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 5-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, O'Conner and Atkins Group Home was providing services for four DCFS children.

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home is located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program

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services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address a few deficient areas.

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home needs to provide comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include short and long term goals and provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:bg
http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Virginia O'Conner, Executive Director, O'Conner and Atkins
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**O'Conner and Atkins Group Home
2010 West 41st Drive
Los Angeles, California 90062
Phone: (323) 294-7305
License Number: 191871781
Rate Classification Level: 7**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

O'Conner and Atkins Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. NSPs are current; however, they are not comprehensive, and do not include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

1. O'Conner and Atkins Group Home management develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are measurable, attainable and include short and long term goals.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents****Comments:**

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for the section.

VI. Personal Rights**Method of assessment –Interviews with children**

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

- 2. O'Conner and Atkins Group Home management provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**

Oconner and Atkins Group Home

2010 W. 41st Drive
Los Angeles, California 90062
(323) 294-7305
(323) 295-0306 fax

Department Of Auditor-Controller

500 W. Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA. 90012
(213) 220-2479

Attention: Belinda Gibson, MS

6-1-2006

RE: Corrective Action Plan

II. Program Services.

1. Provide residents with comprehensive Needs and Service Plans that are measurable.

The House Social worker will ensure that Needs and Service Plans are measurable and attainable. The Group Home Consultant has prepared a new extended Needs and Service form to reflect short and long term goals, tools for measuring and permanency plans. A Training Class will be completed on 6-7-06 by the Group Home Consultant to address short and long term objectives, goals and measurement tools.

Start Date: 6-7-06

IV. Clothing and allowance.

2. Provide residents with required minimum weekly allowance.

The weekly allowance has been changed to meet weekly minimum of five to seven dollars depending on the residents age.

Start date: 5-20-06